



Written by [Walter E. Williams](#) on September 2, 2020

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Nonsense

Check out any professional and most college basketball teams. Their starting five, and most of their other 10 players, are black, as is 80% of the NBA. This does not come anywhere close to the diversity and inclusion sought by the nation's social justice warriors. Both professional and college coaches have ignored and threw any pretense of seeking diversity and inclusiveness. My question to you is: Would a basketball team be improved if coaches were required to include ethnically diverse players for the sake of equity? I have no idea of what your answer might be but mine would be: "The hell with diversity, equity and inclusion. I am going to recruit the best players and do not care if most of them turn out to be black players." Another question: Do you think that any diversity-crazed college president would chastise his basketball coach for lack of diversity and inclusiveness?



Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (National Accelerator Laboratory) is home to the world's most powerful experiments, fastest supercomputers and top-notch physics researchers. Much of SLAC's research is on particle accelerators that are complicated machines that are designed, engineered and operated to produce high-quality particle beams and develop clues to the fundamental structure of matter and the forces between subatomic particles. You can bet that their personnel makeup exhibits very little concern about racial diversity, equity and inclusion. The bulk of their scientists is not only Americans of European and Asian ancestry but mostly men. My question to you is: What would you do to make SLAC more illustrative of the racial, ethnic and sexual diversity of America? As for me, my answer would be the same one that I gave in the basketball example: I am going to recruit the brightest scientists and I do not care if most of them turn out to be men of European and Asian ancestry.

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In the hard sciences, one will find black Americans underrepresented. For example, a 2018 survey of the American Astronomical Society, which includes undergraduates, graduate students, faculty members and retired astronomers, found that 82% of members identified as white and only 2% as black or African American. Only 3% of bachelor's degrees in physics go to black students. In 2017, some fields, such as structural engineering and atmospheric physics, graduated not a single black Ph.D. The conspicuous absence of black Americans in the sciences have little or nothing to do with racism. It has to do with academic preparation. If one graduates from high school and has not mastered a minimum proficiency in high school algebra, geometry and precalculus, it is likely that high-paying careers such as engineering, medicine, physics and computer technology are hermetically sealed off for life.



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There are relatively few black fighter jet pilots. There are stringent physical, character and mental requirements, which many black applicants could meet. But fighter pilots must also have a strong knowledge of air navigation, aircraft operating procedures, flight theory, fluid mechanics, meteorology and engineering. The college majors that help prepare undergraduates for a career as a fighter pilot include mathematics, physical science and engineering. But if one graduates from high school without elementary training in math, it is not likely that he will enroll in the college courses that would qualify him for fighter pilot training.

At many predominantly black high schools, not a single black student tests proficient in math and a very low percentage test proficient in reading; however, these schools confer a diploma that attests that the students can read, write and compute at a 12th-grade level and these schools often boast that they have a 70% and higher graduation rate. They mislead students, their families and others by conferring fraudulent diplomas.

What explains the fact that over 80% of professional basketball players are black, as are about 70% of professional football players? Only an idiot would chalk it up to diversity and inclusion. Instead, it is excellence that explains the disproportionate numbers. Jewish Americans, who are just 3% of our population, win over 35% of the Nobel prizes in science that are awarded to Americans. Again, it is excellence that explains the disproportionality, not diversity and inclusion. As my stepfather often told me, "To do well in this world, you have to come early and stay late."

Walter E. Williams is a professor of economics at George Mason University. To find out more about Walter E. Williams and read features by other Creators Syndicate writers and cartoonists, visit the Creators Syndicate webpage at www.creators.com.

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